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INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM:

THE GERM OF NATIONAL PROGRESS
AND PERMANENCE.

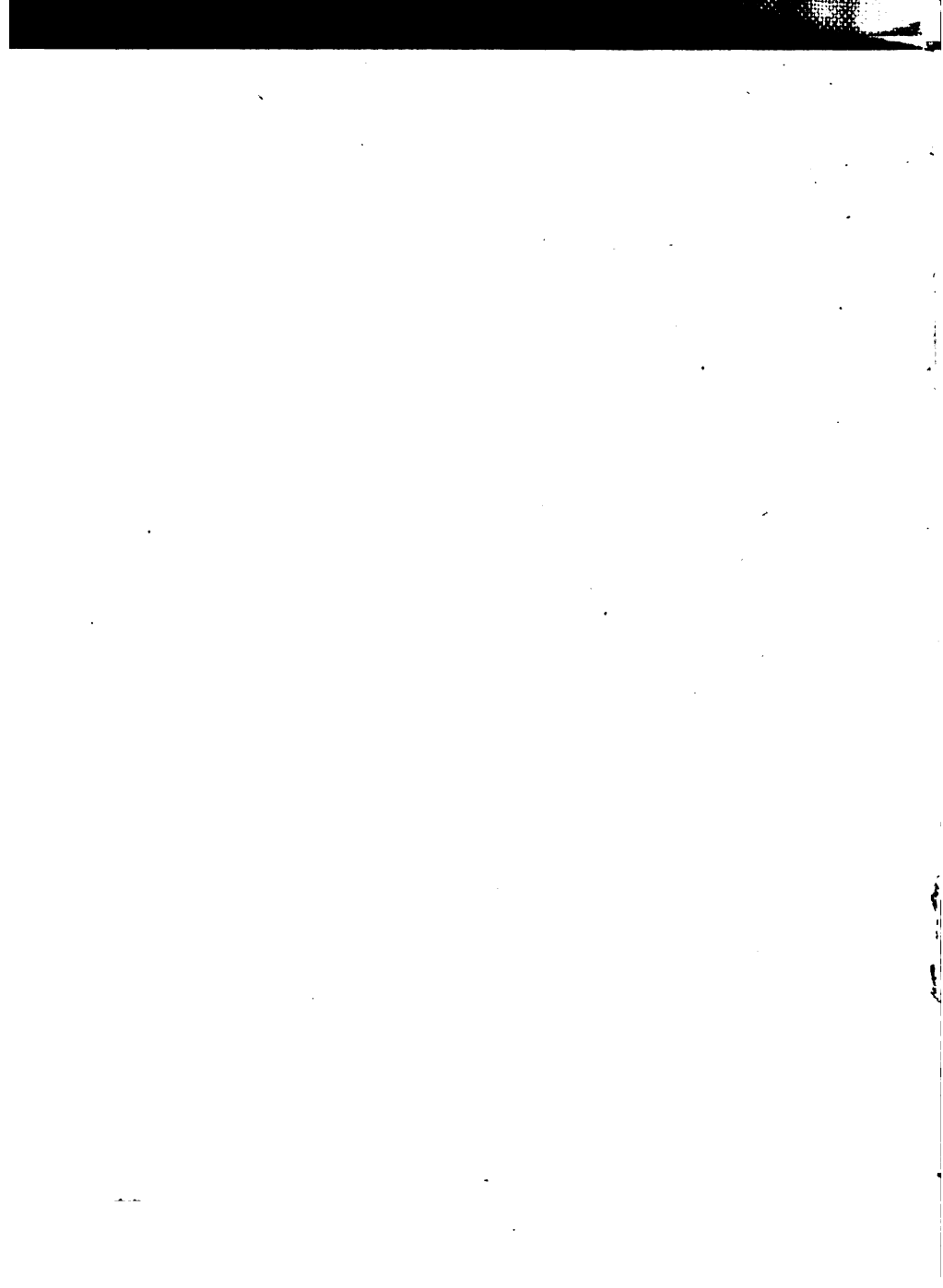
AN ADDRESS

Delivered before the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, on
November 7th, 1895,

.. BY THE ..

HON. THOMAS F. BAYARD.

Issued by the New England Free Trade League.



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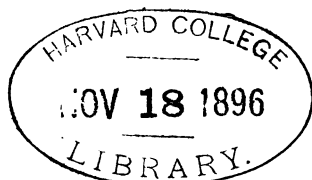
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BOSTON:

GEO. H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 141 FRANKLIN STREET,
1896.

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Dr. S. A. Green

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM:

THE GERM OF NATIONAL PROGRESS AND PERMANENCE.

YOU have done me high honour by your invitation to address the Members of so distinguished and learned a Society, in this renowned intellectual centre. Not without misgiving have I ventured to come before you, trusting, nevertheless, that the strength of the text may sustain the weakness of the preacher, and that the force of simple truth, however imperfectly stated, and if only fragmentary, may yet enable me to assist in placing another stone in the great wall of good government, under an elevated and permanent civilization.

Never since the world was peopled has mankind stood in such anxious expectancy, awaiting the outcome of the immediate future, as in these closing years of the nineteenth century. Men are wistfully striving to peer through the portals of the year 1900—marvelling as the effect and forces of applied science are unfolded to our comprehension, and discovery

moves on, each invention leading in another, in stately procession; we, all the while rapt in wonder, are straining in hope and fear to catch the coming word, and to comprehend its import.

Never was speculation so rife, never was the field of human observation so unobstructed and expanded, nor the ascertainment and sifting of facts so facile. Never were opinions more diverse, nor was it ever so obviously important to detect and assert the philosophical principle, in recognition and obedience to which the *lucidus ordo* of human government may be preserved and kept in view, and the retrocession of mankind prevented.

At no stage of history was it more important to call to mind the great principle that government is a means, not an end, and is instituted to maintain those general liberties which are essential for human happiness and progress.

There is a deep movement of unrest in the breasts of men, and the forces of society move in strong and variant currents — the concentrated weight of armed repression and the upheavals of popular discontent are alike plainly discernible.

In some countries consolidation of empire progresses remarkably and impressively — in others disintegration is equally signified. Old dynasties, in sorrowful impotency, are drifting helplessly on the surface of events, or sinking palpably and hopelessly into the sea of time, which threatens soon to engulf them, and even the memories of their unproductive civili-

zation—the roots of which have dried up and lost the principle of growth.

Other nations appear glowing with sanguine self-confidence, in lusty vigour and virility, springing forward and upward as though vivified by an *elixir vite* which expels fear and feebleness, and sends strength and hope tingling through every fibre.

In some nations the hand of autocratic power and unequal privilege appears to tighten upon society; and if now and then it seems to relax its hold, it is only to extend and fasten more securely its grip upon the masses over whom it bears sway.

In others, the progress of the doctrine and spirit of democracy widens the base of power, and calls into political consultation the great body of the inhabitants, depositing the ultimate power of decision in a majority of numbers.

Never were the destructive forces of warfare marshalled in such impressive array as we see them to-day—never before did earth shake under the measured tread of so many men armed, and prepared to be armed—never in history were weapons so lethal, missiles so mighty, and explosives so terrific and powerful, or in hands so carefully drilled and instructive in their employment—never were the preparations for war on land and sea comparable, in scale and efficiency, to those of the present day.

At no time has science been so potently enlisted as to-day,

nor the treasure and credit of nations and the products of toil and labour poured out in such lavish and unlimited supply to strengthen and assist the art of war and destruction; nor the search light of investigation and experience thrown with such developing and informing power, irradiating the present, and the immediate future, with wisdom drawn from the carefully weighed history of human contentions in the past. The influence of sea power upon military operations on land was never so convincingly demonstrated, and the relations and connections of all regions of the terra-aqueous globe so well defined and practically comprehended, and by the practical annihilation of time and distance brought into such close relations of inter-dependence.

Contemplating all these terrific forces, there is no thoughtful man who is not anxiously questioning his heart, what does all this preparation portend? What is to be the result to the civilization and progress of the human race of the conflict of such forces, and the changes it may at any moment create?

But this disposition to an exaggerated and ever increasing militarism is necessarily accompanied by grievous pecuniary burdens; the weight of taxation is growing fearfully, and as men are withdrawn from productive industries and remunerative pursuits, the great engine of the State, the sovereign power of taxation, is put in motion everywhere and in every shape to gather revenues to support the vast expenditures.

In his "Making of England" Green has told how mountain

ranges, great rivers, valleys, and the varied distribution of hill and plain, tended to throw smaller tribes together into peoples and nations, and to form from their union a corporate organization which widened and elevated the sphere of human life and human action. These physical agencies have exercised great influence and brought about vast modifications; but what are we to say of the force of the scientific discoveries of our own day, which have levelled or pierced mountain ranges, bridged rivers, seas and oceans, converted the ocean into a whispering tube into which mankind pour their messages, inviting freedom of exchange, the quick announcing of needs, the universal conduit of limitless demand and supply from every soil and every climate, instructing mankind in their capacities for mutual service, and making their intercourse more and more inter-dependent, useful and beneficent to each other? For reciprocal amity between nations is the consequence of just and liberal commerce: an interchange that promotes the wealth and happiness of all.

For lo, the fall of ocean's wall
 Space mocked, and time outrun,
 And round the world the thought of all
 Is as the thought of one.
 And one in heart, as one in blood,
 Shall all her people be;
 The hands of human brotherhood
 Are clasped beneath the sea.

Association gives strength and promises the means of resistance to power. The inventions of the day furnish the machinery of communication and concentration of human effort and will in a degree never before possible. And property is massed in its own defence, and is capitalized and incorporated in powerful associations. At the same time education has roused the masses: the schoolmaster has indeed been abroad, legislation has responded to his voice, and the organized unions of the labouring classes far exceed in numbers the armies equipped and supported in unproductive readiness for employment, by the productive industry of the nation at large.

The forces of productive industry were never so great, and the burdens upon their products were never so heavy. Combination and consolidation to resist injustice, and competition for success, have gradually arrayed capital and labour in opposite camps, in which the power of each is separately and too often adversely organized, and serious conflicts have occurred, and conflicts more serious are impending, which threaten disaster to that tranquillity and good order of the State which are essential not only for its progress, but for the maintenance of the civilization to which the world has attained.

Such conflicts, so deplorable and disastrous, are wholly the results of misunderstanding; for it is clear and indubitable that the interests of capital and labour are united by a common fate: they are co-partners, not adversaries, and there should be no obscuration of this important truth. The legislation or

the party management that proceeds upon the false idea that the interests of capital and labour are divisible and antagonistic, should alike be condemned, for the prosperity of each is bound up with the other, and the principles of personal liberty are equally necessary for the welfare of both.

In this threatened conflict and confusion of the forces of society, and seeking the origin of that free government which is essential for happiness and progress, and how it shall be perpetuated, I ask, What is its germ? What is the seed from which human liberty springs, and which must never be overlooked, but renewed, replanted, and protected as the generations of men pass away and their successors fill their places?

When I contemplate the autocratic power which is exercised in some countries to-day, and behold the organized and associated powers of wealth and numbers welded in such an overwhelming phalanx in others, I ask, Where is the safety and personal freedom of the individual? How is it to be guarded and secured? For the freedom of its individual members is the essential basis of the freedom of the State. The movement of the day, sometimes open, sometimes concealed in the robes of philanthropy and paternalism, but more often discernible in policies purely selfish, is toward *State Socialism*, as an opposing force to *Autocracy*. But either is Despotism, and fatal to that individual freedom of man's mind and soul which is the instrumentality by which the world, under the very laws of its origin and progress, has been raised

from brutality and barbarism to its present standard of civilization.

These problems of society rise on every side, and the peace and order of the world are seriously menaced.

The centripetal forces seem to move almost irresistibly towards consolidation and centralization, and in the presence of such exaggerated militarism, with its stupendous powers, with the vast plutocratic combinations of incorporated wealth and capital so closely in alliance; with the wide-spread national and international popular organizations of labour, with their solidified, massed, numerical force, one asks, with just alarm, what is to become of the individual—the free man, the essential unit of a society that hopes to retain the principle of growth and progress; of adaptation to those advances and improvements which demand the open mind, the complete liberty of human faculties, first for their discovery, and after that for their reception and assimilation? Is there not cause to fear lest between the upper and the nether millstones of the twin despotisms, military absolutism, and socialistic tyranny, the freedom of the individual may be ground to death?

What can prevent this but insistence upon a distribution of the powers of government into independent departments, and a careful restriction of those powers to public uses only?

Frame society as you will, it is by personal characteristics

and individual qualities that its affairs in the end must be decided. The wise resort to arbitration by contending nations raises the subject of dispute out of the disorder and clamour of an unwieldy body of inflamed and conflicting minds — in which selfishness is usually discernible — into the comparative serenity and disinterestedness of selected intelligence, usually of one, and never of more than a very limited number of arbitrators.

In human affairs the power of ultimate decision irresistibly contracts as it graduates to its apex, and there is no escape from this law of social and political dynamics, and the growth of intelligence and means of information and communication seem only to increase its operation.

As an illustration of this, a few years ago I served as a member of a commission, composed of fifteen men, to whom was — and, as I think, wisely and creditably — remitted the virtual decision of a contested popular election, which had been held under circumstances of unusual excitement in a nation of upwards of 60,000,000 inhabitants, under a suffrage system which includes, practically, the entire male population over the age of 21 years. And the final decision of that commission was carried by the vote of a single member; so that the numerical pyramid of power rose from an electoral base of more than five million votes to the narrow apex of a single vote, by which the control of the entire executive branch of the government of a free and strong nation, with its immense and manifold powers, was committed to the hands of one

of the Presidential candidates, for the term fixed by the Constitution.

Let me emphasise what I can only call the hinge of this great question, which, I fear, in the conflict of more noisy forces, may be overshadowed.

By the recognition of the individual as the essential unit of society, the voluntary principle becomes the basis of governmental action. Abandon the man and disregard his moral nature—silence the voice of his conscience, as it alternately pleads and threatens, and substitute the rule of overpowering numbers, and that mysterious and undefined entity "Collectivism" in which wisdom is supposed to be gathered, or the single will of an autocrat—and the principle of consolidated and coercive power will necessarily be substituted.

Not without serious self-questioning have I assumed to address you upon a subject so profound—before the aspects of which I reverently pause—but I cannot free myself from a sense of duty to speak straightforwardly and from my heart as in the service of perfect freedom, as a citizen of a Christian country, to men holding in this land the same belief, and upon a topic in which the highest duties of citizenship of both countries have their roots. I must not be misunderstood nor supposed to harbour any intention to pass beyond the province of secular discussion, or the just and natural scope of the subject selected, which is the duty and necessity of guarding personal freedom and individual liberty as the very seed and germ of

human progress against the encroachments of consolidated power, and its suppression or overthrow by despotism in any of its shapes, whether —

Vultus instantis tyranni,
or
Civium ardor prava jubentium.

Autocracy, Plutocracy, Oligarchy, Socialism, or Mob-rule, each and all are equally fatal to well-ordered government, of which the end is the personal liberty and happiness of the individual, a society in which the essential unit is a free man.

When, "from the thick darkness where He was," God spake on Mount Sinai, His commandments were addressed to the individuals of the human race, and every solemn injunction of prohibition or of performance was pronounced to each person severally. "Thou shalt," and "thou shalt not," never in the plural, but in the singular throughout.

The one prayer framed for human guidance by the Son of God mainly and plainly teaches these things:—

The universal Fatherhood of the Creator; the equal individual and direct access, at will, of every human being to Him; the personality contained in the relation of parent and child, and the consequent kindred of the human race. The injunction of absolute privacy in the approach to Him, alone and in the seclusion of an inner room, the door being closed, kneeling down in secret supplication, and asking that the kingdom of God shall come and His will be done on earth.

The divine commandment of this prayer conceded, it is impossible to deny that the maintenance of individual conscience and private judgment is an absolute and abiding duty, the performance of which contains the germ of human happiness, and its growth, and that human progress and safety are dependent upon obedience to it.

In the primordial nature of man this principle is implanted, for "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, and to this instrumentality, so selected and endowed, dominion was given over the earth and over every living thing upon the earth.

If we are seeking light to lead our march in life, and arranging our plans of government as means to the great end, it behooves us to recognize this origin and underlying nature, and to frame our laws in subordination and harmony.

From these laws of our being there is no escape. They must continue in operation, accompanying and entering into every stage and varied condition of human existence, under whatever form of social and political association, so long as the world shall endure.

It is vain to suppose that the life of a nation, and of the individuals who compose it, can be ordered and regulated with hope of healthful progress or permanence, when organized in disregard or in opposition to the law ordained in its creation.

Some things are accidental and transitory, others are essentially permanent. The freedom of the individual in human society is, and always must be, the essential and immutable factor to meet and obediently to recognize and carry out the developments of the Supreme Will as it shall be permitted to become known to the minds and consciences of men — if progress or even permanence in civilization is hoped for.

For as man is

“Heaven born and destined to the skies again,”

the laws that placed him here will surely vindicate themselves.

The voluntary principle needs and calls for the exercise and expansion of the human faculties — moral, intellectual, and physical — while the coercive and involuntary principle induces their disuse, contraction, and enfeeblement — and here is the parting of the ways — and I have endeavoured to point out the right way, and by stating the origin and nature of mankind, to lead you to believe that, in the scrupulous safeguarding of personal liberty, independence in judgment, thought, and lawful action, the true seed of progress and permanence can alone be found.

Those who believe the wisdom and morals of Christ, and yet doubt or deny His Divinity — and we who believe His Divinity, and, so guided, accept the moral order it inculcates, which has lighted up the pathway of duty and upward progress of humanity — can all together bow in obedience to teachings that so unquestionably have transformed and advanced Christendom to

the leading place it holds in the world's affairs, and so manifestly have impressed themselves upon the civilization they have created, which raises its head and smiles upon the world as His Kingdom comes and His Divinity progresses. The lesson taught is the dignity of humanity: that within each human heart is the Kingdom of God, and that the conservation of individuality and personal character is the essential duty for the gradual comprehension of "the increasing purpose" and the progress of the race.

The most profound and salutary influence in the progress of the world has come from the institution of single and indissoluble marriage, and where it has been most respected the highest and most influential civilization will be found.

Silently, slowly, but irresistibly, an enduring principle has, by Divine ordinance, made its way into man's social and political existence, by the decree that elevated one half the human race to its just individual sphere of duty and responsibility, and spiritual equality with the other half. When the dignity of her equal birthright was thus Divinely proclaimed, woman as the help-meet and companion of man, no longer the mere toy of passion, or the unequal and degraded victim of polygamy, was assigned to her just and original place in the law of creation — then, and not until then, the names of wife, mother, and daughter, began to bear their true significance, and the tie of marriage was placed above all others. Upon this equal union the institution of the family is founded. Home and its rela-

tions, the care and education of her children, endowed the wife and mother with powers, duties, and responsibilities but little known before. Increasing confidence was followed by increased affection and respect, and the assured legitimacy of offspring induced industry and the acquisition of property from the sense of reliance upon its transmission and inheritance.

There is a formal term which in later days has lost something of its sweet original significance — the “spinster” — for it told how the clothing of the entire household came from the active industry of woman, and the Saxon phrase, even more forgotten, “Freodowebbe,” — “the weaver of peace,” expressing the subtler influence distilled by gentleness, and love and trust, which colour the web of life with the hues of Heaven.

“And pure religion breathing household laws,”

passing its domestic precincts, has transfused its influence into the civilization of our day, until it has become its most potential force. Without it our present status of civilization could never have been attained, and upon it rest our best hopes for its maintenance and progress.

Truth has been called the daughter of Time, and assuredly the history of the nineteen centuries which have passed since the Light of the Christian moral order has been shed upon the world, discloses the indubitable fact that every discovery under which improvement in human relations has been accomplished, and by which the civilization of mankind has progressed, has

been brought into the world's use through the channel of an individual mind, and in no instance by the associated power of mankind. No great discovery can be named which has opened new fields of beneficent and useful industry, increased benevolence, widened and deepened sympathies, and elevated human thought and action, but is due to the free conscience, private judgment, and mental exertion of an individual.

In the world's history, no legislature, no court, no council, no school, no majority of numbers, no aggregation of human force, or association, can be credited with the origination of a single invention or discovery which has marked the advance of the human race. In the brain of the individual man, solely under the personal qualities and characteristics of his nature, the forces which generate discovery and invention have been deposited. This is the true seed of progress and growth, and the torch of knowledge, which is to illumine man's pathway onward and upward, is caught by one human hand as it is dropped by another, or is handed on by the voluntary force of those faculties which are embedded in the nature of that creature who alone of God's creations had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and became a living soul.

“Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours —
 What know we greater than the Soul?”

We are witnessing in our day the decline and fall of empires once mighty in their material force, but now inert, decrepit, devoid of the seminal principle of growth, or the sustenance of a moral order. And it is plainly apparent that these are the necessary and logical consequences of despotic government, the destruction of personal freedom, the enfeeblement of the moral fibre, the paralysis of individual, intellectual and moral growth.

The march of the world's improvement, led by those nations which have safeguarded the freedom of the individual, has changed the face of the world, and the relations of its inhabitants and their intercourse. Where the right of private judgment has been secured and left free, there new ideas have entered, have been accepted and assimilated. And new ideas cannot enter where the individual mind is not free, but is chained fast to a rigid code that contains no vital principle of growth and adaptation to change, and is fed upon the husks of creeds outworn.

We are told that Omar, the lieutenant of Mahomet, ordering the Alexandrian Libraries to be burned, justified their destruction by saying: "If what they taught was not in the Koran, it could not be true, and therefore would mislead, and should be destroyed; and if the Koran did contain it, then all other books were superfluous, and only dangerous." Minds fed upon such creeds are indeed "old bottles," and when the wine of new thoughts is poured into them, the bursting of the bottles

will follow, and the wine is wasted on the ground, and this is the truth of history we read to-day.

When the power that makes the laws, and the power that applies the laws, are in the same hands, the laws are useless, for despotism reigns, and the hope of freedom dying out, the mental faculties become enfeebled, and the whole community withers and decays. Thus despotism creates only ignorance and servility, and ignorance and servility in turn perpetuate despotism.

It will, I believe, be conceded by all students of jurisprudence, that in the annals of political literature, whether of ancient or modern times, high rank must be assigned to the "Fœderalist," the compilation of essays, written to expound and recommend for adoption by the several States of the American Union—the Constitution of the United States—as it had been agreed upon and framed by delegates in Convention at Philadelphia in 1787.

Of the three great men—Hamilton, Madison, and Jay—whose names adorn this volume, and have shed undying lustre on themselves and upon the annals of their country, Alexander Hamilton is justly held the foremost. His name and lineage commend him to the favour of the country in whose capital it is my honour to stand to-day, and, in the country of his choice and citizenship, his reputation is cherished, and his memory is embalmed in the grateful hearts of a people who received from him service, in council and field, second to none of her sons, for Washington was "the Father of his Country."

The debt of the United States to Scotland for the men of virtue and ability she has contributed in the establishment and maintenance of good government under Republican institutions is happily great, but no other single benefit known to me has outweighed in value the presence in that country, at the crucial period of its existence, of Alexander Hamilton.

So impressed was Hamilton with the necessity of separating the great departments of power, that he devoted four of his most careful essays to an examination of the question, and the demonstration of the fatal results to liberty of permitting a union of the three great branches of executive, legislative, and judicial powers in the same hands.

"No political truth," said he, "is of greater political value or is stamped with the authority of more enlightened patrons of liberty than that on which this objection is founded. The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary in the same hands, whether of one or a few or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny. * * The preservation of liberty requires that the three great departments of power should be separate and distinct."

"There can be no liberty," said Montesquieu, "where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person or body of magistrates."

You will, I believe, agree with me in holding the rapid growth and development of the United States to be the most

remarkable page in the history of civilized mankind. The echoes of the savage war-whoop, the crack of the rifle, the sound of the settler's axe, and crash of the falling timber had scarcely died away when, behold, a continental civilization presented itself. One flag waving from the Atlantic to the Pacific shores, and from the Frozen Ocean and the Canadian line to the Gulfs of California and Mexico, over the homes of nearly seventy millions of self-governing, vigorous, and intelligent people, sanguine of the future, and animated with the best results of the world's progress in the scale of civilization. Yet little more than a century has rolled by since, breathless, bleeding, clad in ragged homespun, but radiant with solemn triumph,—

“Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow!”

their ancestors, emerging from an unequal contest, gathered themselves together as a family of Republics, united under a single independent Government, stepped into the family of nations, and calmly took their place at the council table of the world's powers.

This marvellous progress can only be adequately accounted for by the freedom permitted to the units of that population, to each individual citizen, without surrender of conscience, to enjoy the admitted right to accomplish his own manhood, to be fully himself; to select the suitable occupation for which instinctively he felt himself to be competent, and upon which he embarked with the energy born of hope and confidence.

Sanguine temperaments were not repressed and chilled by the narrower and colder aphorisms of older and more calculating prudence, nor was humble birth an invidious bar, nor did they feel the galling fetters of military conscription, nor the weight of plutocratic inequality; but, with energies unrestrained, self-conscious, self-reliant, self-determined, and morally responsible, they pressed forward, each in his own field of enterprise, to gather the harvests of his own industry, and enjoy them beneath his own vine and fig tree, "with none to make him afraid."

The main springs of these active exertions were indefatigable persistence, sincere conviction, enthusiasm, and hope, which are all, and are only, individual qualities and characteristics of the social unit, the free man. And with these subtracted, and the sense of personal responsibility disregarded, no substitute can be found.

In the plan of those who founded American society, the right of man to self-development was held to be essential, primordial, and inviolable, with the single limitation that he should not infringe the rights of others.

The Government he was expected to support was not intended to enrich or support him; but its powers, limited, and delegated in trust, and always terminable, were never to be exercised to create unequal privileges or trammel his lawful efforts to contract and labour for his self-advancement. He was to be protected against violence and injustice from without

and within, and to contribute equally to the common defence and general welfare of the community of which he was an integral part.

And this is the central idea, the dominating purpose and intent of the governmental systems of the English-speaking peoples.

No proclamation of their liberties from Magna Charta on this side of the Atlantic, to the Colonial declaration of independence on the other side, or the written constitution that followed it, was a mere recital of measures or a dry catalogue of statutes, but each and all were vitalized by the eternal principles that make and keep men free, and were laid down with stern and clear significance, not for a day, but for all time, principles of daily life and action, to which the changing forms and conditions of society as it progressed would be adjusted and guarded at every point, and shining like a golden thread through every sentence was the liberty of the individual.

Well might Lord Chatham declare, with noble earnestness, those three words in rude Latin, "*Nullus liber homo*," were more to him than all the elegance of the classics. I cannot resist, here and now, recalling to you those words.

"No freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, disseized, outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed, nor will we proceed against or prosecute him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers, and the law of the land. To no one will we sell, to none will we deny or defer right or justice.

"Wherefore we will and firmly charge that the English Church be free, and that all men in our kingdom have and hold the aforesaid liberties freely, quietly, fully, and wholly, to them and their heirs in all things and places forever.

"Given in the meadow which is called as is aforesaid Runnymede, between Windsor and Staines, on the 15th day of June, 1215."

Nearly six centuries had gone by, and the re-assertion of these rights had been many times made necessary amid the stormy vicissitudes of these kingdoms, and British liberty had been successfully upheld. And these same keynotes of liberty were again sounded in the hearts of men of the same race, who had gone beyond the great ocean to find new homes, and open in the wilderness a broader breathing space for thought and freedom, and the hour struck for them to claim local self-government and independence, and, as the Master-singer Tennyson has sung:

"What wonder if in noble heat
Those men thine arms withstood,
Re-taught the lesson thou had'st taught,
And in thy spirit with thee fought,
Who sprang from English blood.

"Whatever harmonies of law
The growing world assume,
Thy work is thine — the single note
From that deep chord which Hampden smote
Will vibrate to the doom."

The greatest bulwark of freedom is the doctrine of limitation upon human authority, and that the essential personal rights are beyond the jurisdiction of the community; as my countryman Webster said, "There are fireside rights that must never be permitted to be drawn into question."

Personal conscience is marked in every line of the declaration of independence by the American colonists, and each man of them sifted his own heart to find reasons to justify the result. They appealed to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of their intentions, and in reliance upon His protection they mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour to secure the great ends for which government was ordained, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These were all such appeals as individuals alone could make, and could alone carry such declarations into effect.

Independence achieved, they proceeded to secure their personal liberty under a well ordered and carefully guarded fundamental law. Under the Roman civil law the ruler was not subject to its provisions, but not so the common law of England, which was an American birthright. For as Coke put it, "This Magna Charta will have no fellow."

And but the other day the Supreme Court of the United States, by the voice of one of its most distinguished members, now no more (Mr. Justice Miller), repeated this great principle:—

"No man in this country is so high that he is above the law.

No officer of the law may set that law at defiance with impunity. All the officers of the Government, from the highest to the lowest, are creatures of the law, and are bound to obey it.

"It is the only supreme power in our system of government, and every man who, by accepting office, participates in its functions, is only the more strongly bound to submit to that supremacy, and to observe the limitations which it imposes upon the exercise of the authority which it gives."

And in 1787, when the Constitution of the United States was framed, into it were built the principles of Magna Charta, delegating certain and essential powers to the Congress. The exercise of those reserved was inhibited. The Congress was forbidden to prohibit the free exercise of religion, or require any religious test as a qualification to any office or public trust, or to prohibit the right of the people peaceably to assemble, or to infringe their right to keep and bear arms, and to be secure in their persons, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures; nor should any one be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself; nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor should private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

Speedy and public trial before an impartial jury, information of the nature of the accusation, and being confronted by witnesses against him, and have compulsory process to obtain wit-

nesses in his favour and have the assistance of counsel for his defence, were all expressly secured.

The chief claims of those clericals who, in other eras of history, had sought to establish and enforce absolute power, had its basis in their alleged right and duty to coerce and suppress the individual conscience of man, and to compel him to look towards Divinity through their glasses. Of this duty they were convinced, and it was based upon absolute distrust in humanity at large, and the consequent necessity of resorting to an intermediary in having recourse to the Great Supreme, and under such arbitrary conditions individual liberty necessarily was crushed.

Against this fundamental error the principles of British and American liberty stand opposed, and they contain the vindication of the dignity of man's personality in his relations to the Supreme Being, and this has been the source of the entire advance of civilization.

Long ago it was said that the end of the Constitution, statutes, laws, and customs of this realm was to bring twelve honest men together into a box, which is but a terse mode of saying that every form and principle of law is intended to secure personal freedom.

Therefore do I earnestly invoke opposition to State Socialism in all its forms, and sound a note of warning against the many propositions of political interference and State management under the garb of philanthropic aid or paternalism, for

they are fraught with danger to the principle of individual freedom.

It is impossible for me to comprehend how it can be considered practicable or right and just to limit and fix, by a general public law, rigorously and indiscriminately, the same measure of time during which a man shall be allowed to work, for all descriptions of labour, regardless of the special incidents of the different occupations, and to compress all contracts for labour into such a uniform cast-iron arrangement.

The degree of attention, of the application of sight, hearing, dexterity, or strength, is scarcely ever the same; some processes of production are rapid and continuous, others slow and intermittent; some controlled by temperature and climate, but each having its own distinct conditions, and no two alike. Equally unreasonable and impracticable would it be that the amount and quality of labour to be performed within the prescribed number of hours should be also regulated, and with equal logic establish the amount of wages to be paid for the labour so performed—for all three features are requisite to effect the purpose intended, which is to substitute State control for the right of individual contract.

This is not personal freedom—it is State servitude; and the institution of property would inevitably perish under its grinding power.

Labour is the universal creator of property, and if a man cannot be secure, as in his own right, to use and control his

own labour, he can no longer be called a free man — he will be controlled by a merciless despotism, in which his idiosyncrasies are ignored, his tastes and faculties disregarded, and he is deprived of his most essential right ; for to use the words of Adam Smith : “The property which every man has in his labour, as it is the original foundation of all other property, so it is the most sacred and inviolate.”

“The patrimony of the poor man lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands, and to hinder him from employing this strength and dexterity, in what manner he thinks proper, without injury to his neighbour, is a plain violation of the most sacred property.”

The great Irish philosopher and statesman, Edmund Burke, bore like testimony. “Men have a right to the fruits of their industry and the means of making their industry fruitful. Whatever each man can do without trespassing upon others he has a right to do for himself, and he has a right to a fair proportion of all which society, with its combination and skill and force, can do in his favour.”

For the superfluities of the rich there would appear less urgency for safeguarding than for the necessities of the poor, and, the more exigent the need, the more imperative the remedy, and whether the subject of the demand is for labour performed or property in some other form, there can be no difference in principle, for the same law is essential to all ; for the humblest individual or the organized association, all the

rights of private property must be equally sustained, and no organization, however powerful, whether of numbers or property, should be suffered to override them, and cannot be permitted to do so except at the cost of that individual liberty which is the essential basis of free government.

Justice enthroned on law is the only protection of the humble and defenceless. How shall justice be enthroned but by a united public opinion demanding it? And the demand must originate in the articulate individual conscience, which must be listened to and respected, or we shall be ground down by the despotism of numbers, or military autocracy, or aggregated wealth, enacting and compelling obedience to laws, not to establish justice and ensure domestic tranquillity, but to secure unjust privileges and unequal advantage.

In my own country I have witnessed the insatiable growth of that form of State Socialism styled "Protection," which I believe has done more to foster class legislation and create inequality of fortune, to corrupt public life, to banish men of independent mind and character from the public councils, to lower the tone of national representation, blunt public conscience, create false standards in the popular mind, to familiarise it with reliance upon State aid and guardianship in private affairs, divorce ethics from politics, and place politics upon the low level of a mercenary scramble, than any other single cause.

Step by step, and largely owing to the confusion of civil strife, it has succeeded in obtaining control of the sovereign

power of taxation, never hesitating at any alliance, or the resort to any combination that promised to assist its purpose of perverting public taxation from its only true justification and function, of creating revenue for the support of the Government of the whole people, into an engine for the selfish and private profit of allied beneficiaries and combinations called "Trusts." Under its dictation individual enterprise and independence have been oppressed, and the energy of discovery and invention debilitated and discouraged.

It has unhesitatingly allied itself with every policy which tends to commercial isolation, dangerously depletes the treasury, and saps the popular conscience by schemes of corrupting favour and largesse to special classes, whose support is thereby attracted.

Thus it has done so much to throw legislation into the political market, where jobbers and chafferers take the place of statesmen. The words of Lowell's warning well apply:—

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in flintiest rock,
States climb to power by; slippery those with gold
Down which they stumble to eternal mock:
No chafferer's hand shall long the sceptre hold,
Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell the block."

Gradually the commercial marine of the United States has disappeared from the high seas, with the loss of the carrying trade, and the dispersion of the class of trained seamen and

skilled navigators; the exceptions, that only prove the rule, are the few vessels lately built, and only by making a breach by special contract in the general tariff and navigation laws, a reluctant confession of the impolicy and unwisdom of both, but an object lesson from which valuable instruction may be drawn.

More than seventy years ago, when this practice of the substitution of State interference for free individual enterprise and energy was first mooted, and before the destructive policy of protection had struck its roots in American legislation, my great countryman, Daniel Webster, had said: "How, sir, do shipowners and navigators accomplish this? How is it they are able to meet and in some measure to overcome universal competition? Not, sir, by protection and bounties, but by unwearied exertion, by extreme economy, by unshaken perseverance, by that manly and resolute spirit which *relies on itself to protect itself*."

"I need not say the navigation of the country is essential to its honour and its defence."

And at a National Congress of Farmers, just held at Atlanta, I find full confirmation of all that I have said in the address of a former Commissioner of Navigation:—

"To think awhile of the ocean and its navigation, of the ships and seamen carrying on the commerce of the world, should bring delight and stir our pride; for many builders of reputation, many famous shipmasters and some of the most success-

ful merchants began careers of honour as farmer boys. Once our laws encouraged enterprise on land and sea, and our people succeeded. The four pillars of our prosperity were agriculture and manufactures, commerce and navigation. American ships and American trade went everywhere; and the American flag at sea had the respect of the world. So it was, but is no more. No call to the sea sounds now for Young America, it has been swept by rivals so cleanly from the sea that the proportion of American carriage, in what is called American commerce, is now but half as large as in 1789.

"When we had shipping of our own, and merchants of our own people to carry on our trade, we had no fears of adverse balances and the export of gold. There was then no nation, rival or enemy, that could strip us of our wealth. Now there is, and the world knows that a foreign marine is a stripping machine. A famous Englishman laid down this maxim for his country's guidance: 'Whosoever commands the sea commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world and, consequently, the world itself.'"

It is incorrect to speak of "Protection" as a national policy, for that it can never be, because it can never be other than the fostering of special interests at the expense of the rest; and this overthrows the great principle of equality before the law, and that resultant sense of justice and equity in the administration of sovereign powers which is the true cause of

domestic tranquillity and human contentment. The value of "protective" taxation to its beneficiaries consists in its inequality, for without discrimination in favour of someone there is no advantage to any one, and if the tax is equally laid on all, all will be kept upon the relative level from which they started; and this simply means a high scale of living to all, high cost of production of everything, and consequent inability to compete anywhere outside the orbit of such restrictive laws.

But the enfeeblement of individual energies and the impairment of manly self-reliance are necessarily involved, and the belief in mysterious powers of the State and a reliance upon them to take the place of individual exertion fosters the growth of State Socialism, and personal liberty ceases to be the great end of Government.

How can we fail to perceive that it is fatal to hopes of advancement — or even of retention of what has been gained by civilization — when individual freedom and idiosyncrasies of personal character are impeded or cramped in their free expansion by the stupid interference of inflexible labour laws, which may be reasonably applicable to one description of human exertion, and yet wholly unadapted for others; beneficial to one man, hurtful to another; a benefit to one class, a curse to another; repressing activity, discouraging energy and enterprise, and tending only to establish a standard of dull and hopeless mediocrity? I can imagine no more unhappy fate than for a man to be chained to an occupation below the natural

level of his capacities—cruelly cramped in his aspirations, and forbidden to rise to his full intellectual and moral stature. And vain and irreverent are all such attempts to establish a dead level in human faculties of body or mind—a bed of Procrustes, on which the bodies and minds of men are to be stretched or maimed, but never to rest in peace.

Who will not admit that the individual discoveries and labours of such men as Caxton, Watt, Arkwright, Stephenson, Nasmyth, Wedgwood, Bessemer, Whitworth, and Whitney, Ericsson, Bell, or Edison, have been productive of infinitely greater, steady, happy, prosperous, and beneficial industry and employment—giving comfort and occupation to countless members of the human race, and an upward impetus to the cause of humanity and civilization, far beyond all that statutes and societies for the avowed protection of labour can ever pretend to accomplish? Not France alone, but the entire civilized world mourns the death of Louis Pasteur, whose discoveries of the origin of disease are of such value to humanity at large. The list of such individual benefactions is, happily, too long to attempt its repetition here, and their names crowd our memories and swell our hearts with gratitude and admiration—but it may be confidently asserted that each of the inventions which have so blessed mankind and promoted its progress has originated in the mind of an individual, the sole channel through which it has been introduced for the general welfare.

The pathway to invention is not broad, and its narrow

defile admits the entrance of no two minds abreast — the pursuit requires segregation and concentration of the faculties — and often to escape unfriendly obstruction, interference, and anticipation, the secret of the discovery must be sheltered and concealed in the solitary bosom of the inventor, until the propitious moment for its announcement arrives.

The “garment hem of cause” can be touched only by the hand of the individual student —

“Trying, with uncertain key,
Door by door of mystery:”

and in solitude he must patiently pursue his object — watching the opportunity to gather the golden grains as they fall slowly from the store-house of Nature’s secrets.

Such reflections increase respect for individual freedom, and consideration for the rights and duties of others; selfishness is lessened, and the habitual recognition of others’ rights broadens the scope of observation and quickens the perception of altruistic duty. With the freedom of the individual grows his dignity, and public spirit here has its truest genesis, for it becomes visibly the common cause of all — not a single act or measure, but a rule of action, a principle which is the necessary accompaniment of every act — and a standard is thus erected, around which all can rally, in the sense of security, for the rights of each — for it is the common interest made evident.

If this can be made the ruling force of a nation, its eleva-

tion, progress, and permanence are assured—for Justice is the permanent foundation of a State—and public laws, founded and regulated upon such a principle, will connect all classes and occupations of society, by preventing undue advantage to any at the cost of the rest.

Laws touched with such a high public spirit would meet with public honour and respect—suggestions of revolution would be deprived of their chief stimulant—and the occupation of the Agitator and Demagogue would be gone.

And to what audience and in what spot on the green earth could a plea for respect and freedom for individual genius be so confidently urged as in the City of Edinburgh?

What country has greater cause than yours for love and pride in her children, and can more forcibly illustrate, by a long catalogue of illustrious names, the value to the whole world of each true soul, conscious of its powers and fearlessly faithful in their expression?

In philosophy, science, and art, in every department of intellectual acquirement and education, Scotland's rank is second to none, and in some names leads the world.

It is not fitting that I should, in this presence, leave unspoken the name of Adam Smith, and I pronounce it with profound respect for the great individual whose clear mind first taught men the true philosophy of liberated commerce and freedom of exchanges, and induced the longest step yet taken in the path of political economy.

Well might David Hume declare, as Buckle has recorded, that "The Wealth of Nations" was the most valuable production of the human mind.

Come from what land he may, who can tread the soil or breathe the air of Caledonia without pausing with love and gratitude to bless the name and memory of Walter Scott? He has not only peopled lake and glen with the creations of his imagination, but has bound history fast in the flowery chains of his fiction; every mountain, stream, and valley of his native land he has bedecked with his exquisite fancy; he has instilled in human hearts everywhere respect and sympathy for the virtues that make homes happy and refined, and nations honoured and beloved.

Scotland without Sir Walter! It cannot be imagined. Such divorce can never be. He was the gift of God to his country, and through his country to humanity at large. No other such record, save that of the one and only Shakespeare, is in the literature of his race, and when he is forgotten it will be a sign of national decay.

Years ago an American poet asked:—

"But who his human heart hath laid
To Nature's bosom nearer,
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
To love a tribute dearer?"

And, when each of us essays to answer Whittier's question,

I am sure that one and all will pronounce the name of ROBERT BURNS, the marvellous Scottish peasant who, as Wordsworth said, "Shames the schools." And this "poor inhabitant below" was born and lived and died in narrow poverty, from whose chilling grasp he was only released by death, with none of the advantages supposed to be essential for the humblest grade of literature and poesy. But the "living soul" within him soared above his homely surroundings, and as he sang he took the human heart by storm, and in the realm of humanity his state is kingly. From that early and humble grave in Dumfriesshire the music of his soul comes to our ears; he has become a political, religious, and educational force, and —

"Deep in the general heart of men
His power survives."

Burns alone is plenary and unanswerable proof that the free individual is the true seed of progress in civilization.

The trend of modern invention towards equalizing human opportunity for intellectual advance is marvellous. Look for an instant at some of the highest triumphs of invention: not merely the saving of exhausting, cheerless labour; not merely rest for the toil-worn body; but refreshment and delight to the minds and souls of men.

The art conservative of all the arts, printing, is flooding the world with the light of literature; the food of thought, the

nutriment of ideas, are distributed broadcast and imperishably, widening the perception of the common brotherhood of men.

Curran called the twenty-four letters of our alphabet "the natural enemies of folly and slavery," and the line of Byron is even more striking :

" The drop of ink
That, falling, may make thousands, even millions, think."

To-day the smallest coin of the realm will suffice to procure copies of the masterpieces of thought and composition, and the humblest and the poorest individual can summon to his companionship the kings of thought, the master minds of the world.

Ten years ago I sent to London for copies of the New Testament, clearly printed on good paper and protected by substantial binding, for which I paid one penny each. This audience will, I believe, acquit me of emotional extravagance when I confess that I felt a thrill when I took these volumes in my hand and realised the capabilities of such cheap and boundless acquisition.

The strength of Scotland assuredly is found in the education that has been secured to all classes of her people. And in this cultivation of the brain not less has been assisted the cultivation of the heart, which makes the brotherhood and helping hand of Scottish people to each other so known and admired the wide world over.

The cold crust of class and personal selfishness is penetrated by these roots of intellectual fellowship in the commonwealth of letters ; and a tide has set in which, with increasing volume, is drawing men from every class of occupation into a co-operative sympathetic understanding with each other for the advancement and diffusion of learning, which in this country and in the United States has thrown wide open the doors of scholarship, and is bringing the best education practically within the reach of any frugal citizen of average intelligence, expanding the force of modern thought and opening paths to new discovery.

A picture was lately drawn, and by a master hand, in a simple story of Scottish life, which to me was most attractive, and an extract from which, in closing, I will here reproduce, as illustrative of the brotherhood of the human mind, and a touch of nature that makes the whole world kin—the Davids and the Jonathans of actual life.

“It was a low-roofed room, with a box bed and some pieces of humble furniture fit only for a labouring man. But the choice treasures of Greece and Rome lay on the table, and on a shelf beside the bed the college prizes and medals, and everywhere the roses that he loved.

“His peasant mother stood beside the body of her scholar son, whose hopes and thoughts she had shared, and through the window came the bleating of distant sheep.

“It was the idyll of Scottish university life.”

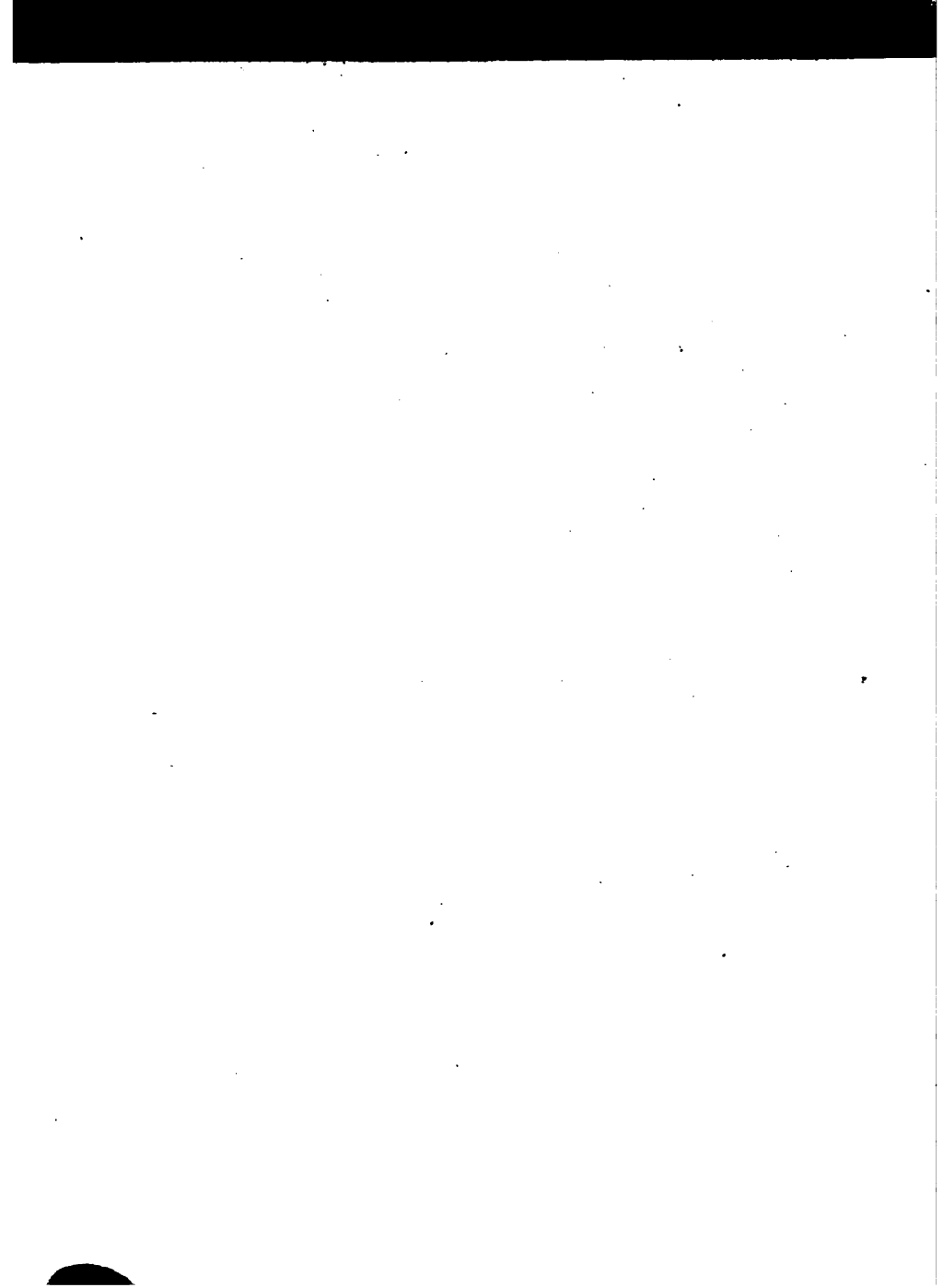
And the words of the high-born and high-bred Gordon to the peasant mother :

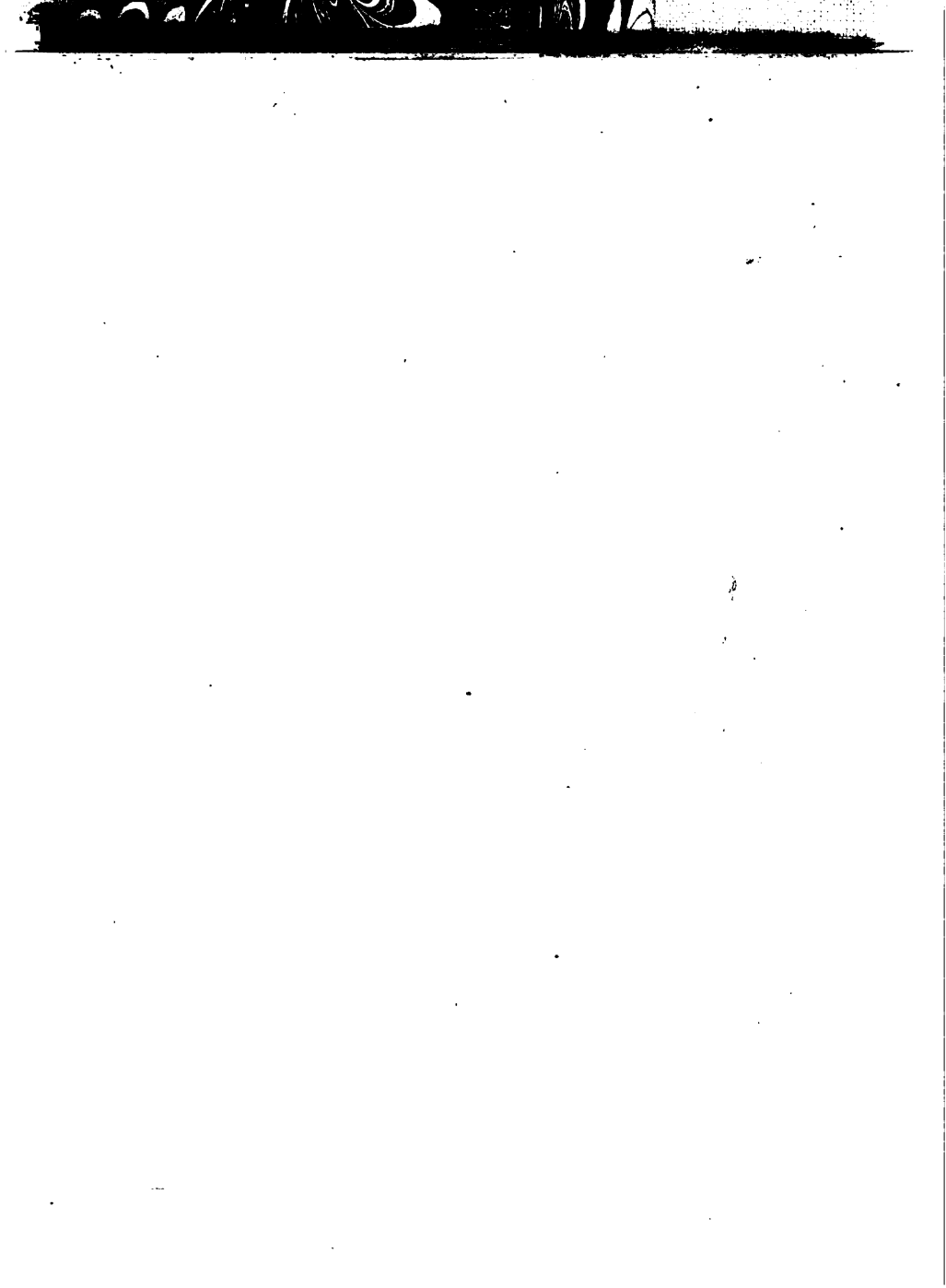
"Your son was the finest scholar of my time, and a very perfect gentleman. He was also my true friend, and I pray God to console his mother, and he bowed low over Marget's worn hand as if she had been a Queen."

In the beginning I referred to the appalling array of martial forces, but we should be equally mindful of the unproclaimed, undecorated, ununiformed armies of healing, restoration, and amelioration, which never were so strong in numbers, in enthusiasm, so potently organized and effectively occupied as they are to-day, nor so mighty in their mild strength since the Star of Bethlehem shed its serene light upon the Chaldean shepherds, and has steadily and irresistibly radiated its influences silently into the hearts of mankind, converting countless men into its unconscious instruments.

Evolution, not revolution, is the quiet masterful force now leading the progress of civilization, and the personal conscience and the "living soul" of the free individual are essential to enable mankind to conform to the changes which are inevitable in its onward journey.

"For what avail, the plough or sail,
Or land, or life, if FREEDOM fail?"





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